

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 10942 311128Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7593
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

S E C R E T CAIRO 10942

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EG, SY, LE
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN LEVERAGE IN LEBANON

REF: A. BEIRUT 13398 B. CAIRO 10804 C. BEIRUT 13090

1. NONE CAN DISAGREE WITH FONMIN TAQLA'S REMARK THAT TRANSFER OF SARG-GOE DISPUTE TO LEBANESE TERRITORY HAS HELPED NO ONE. (REFTEL A). ON OTHER HAND, SUCH TRANSFER WAS KHADDAM'S, NOT SADAT'S, DOING. MOREOVER, AS AMBASSADOR GODLEY POINTED OUT TO TAQLA, EVERYONE IN ARAB WORKD KNOWS SYRIANS ARE SUPPLYING WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION TO THE LEFT. SADAT HIMSELF MADE FURTHER OFF-THE-RECORD ALLEGATION ABOUT SYRIAN MISCHIEF-MAKING TO ABC INTERVIEWER LAST WEEK WHEN HE STATED AS FACT THAT SYRIANS ARE EXPLOITING LEBANESE TRAGEDY BY ENCOURAGING SA'IQA TO "TAKE OVER" PLO AND OUST BASICALLY MODERATE, PRO-EGYPTIAN LEADERSHIP.

2. THEREFORE, SADAT'S REACTION TO PROPOSAL THAT HE MODERATE HIS REMARKS RE SYRIA AND EVEN SAY A FEW WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT FOR ASAD'S EFFORTS TO MEDIATE LEBANESE CRISIS (REFTELS A AND C) IS HARDLY LIKELY TO BE FAVORABLE, AS WE POINTED OUT IN REFTEL B. WE BELIEVE BOTH SADAT AND FAHMY HAVE BEEN REASONABLY CAREFUL TO LIMIT THEIR PUBLIC ALLEGATIONS OF OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE IN LEBANON TO SIMPLY POINTING OUT THAT SUCH INTERFERENCE CANNOT SERVE ARAB GOALS OF MAINTAINING SOVEREIGNTY OF LEBANESE STATE AND CONFESSIONAL HARMONY AMONG LEBANESE PEOPLE.

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3. SINCE SADAT HAS LITTLE OR NO LEVERAGE IN DAMASCUS AT PRESENT, IT WOULD SEEM TO US THAT THOSE ARAB GOVERNMENTS (JORDAN, SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT AND GULF STATES), WHOSE SUPPORT FOR HIS ANTI-SINAI II CAMPAIGN ASAD HAS BEEN SO ASSIDUOUSLY COURTING, MIGHT BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO INFLUENCE SYRIANS TO CEASE THEIR DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES IN LEBANON. FACT THAT PENINSULAR ARABS ARE BANKROOLING ASAD SHOULD GIVEN THEM ADDITIONAL LEVERAGE IN DAMASCUS.
MAESTRONE

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NNN

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